

THE
Mirror of the Stage.

No. 2.] MONDAY, AUGUST 26th, 1822. [Vol. I.

“ To hold, as ’twere, the mirror up to nature;
To show virtue her own features; scorn her own image;
And the very age and body o’ th’ times; its form and pressure.”

LIFE OF MR. T. P. COOKE.

BIOGRAPHY has been described to be that species of history by which we are enabled to trace the efforts of genius from its first timid essay up to the highest pinnacle of its greatness. Who that has perused that deservedly praised work of the great Johnson (his Life of Savage) but must feel the force of its truth? or who, for example, can read the late published work of Mr. O’Meara, and not believe himself in the presence of that “ master spirit of the age ”—Napoleon? Yet, however pleasing the task of tracing the progress of genius, how often it becomes necessary for the biographer to exert the utmost power of his mind, in order to soften down the errors into which untoward talent too frequently falls.

We, however, have no such difficulty to contend against;—we have no errors to excuse,—no eccentricities to defend,—we have only the pleasing task to praise, because that praise is deserved.

The subject of our memoir is the son of an eminent surgeon, in Titchfield-street, Oxford-street, and is in the 37th year of his age. Having had the misfortune to lose his father at a very early period of his life, and having imbibed a predilection for the naval service, he sailed in the Raven, when only ten years old, and participated in the dangers of the blockade of Toulon; being ordered to the Mediterranean, he was with the Earl St. Vincent, in that great and distinguished victory which gave the gallant Admiral his title.

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MR. T. P. COOKE AS GORDON.

The Gipsy — 2nd Dug.

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We have heard several accounts of Mr. Cooke's personal bravery while in the Mediterranean, particularly when boarding

an Algerine corsair, he received the thanks of his captain for his gallant conduct.

Soon after this occurrence, our youthful hero was destined to experience all the horrors of shipwreck, the Raven having been cast away near Cuxhaven: the fatigue he underwent for two days and nights, during this dreadful calamity, so impaired his health, that he was compelled to keep his bed for a considerable time, being severely afflicted with a rheumatic fever, which nearly cost him his life.

Yet, notwithstanding this misfortune, (enough, we think, to turn ordinary minds from following a pursuit so dangerous,) such was his passion for the naval service, that he again "tempted the billowy surge," and sailed in the Prince of Wales, forming part of the squadron commanded by Sir Robert Calder, employed in blockading Brest harbour. In this and other vessels he continued until the peace of Amiens, when he was paid off, and left the navy.

In January, 1804, he made a successful *debut* at the Royalty Theatre, in some trifling character; but such was the opinion even then entertained of his talents, that the late Mr. Astley engaged him for his Amphitheatre, upon liberal terms. He continued with Mr. Astley until Laurent, the celebrated clown, opened the Lyceum with a company of actors, of which Mr. Cooke formed a part. Here he had very frequent opportunities of exhibiting his talents, and was rewarded by the applauses of admiring audiences.

In 1808, Mr. Cooke was engaged by Mr. Elliston, the present proprietor of Drury-lane, to undertake the arduous duties of stage-manager of the Surrey, which he performed with considerable ability.

At this time, Mr. Elliston (in the exercise of his great wisdom) thought fit to alter and *amend* the tragedies of our immortal bard, by reducing them to melo-dramas: although our hero had little, perhaps, to do in this murderous hacking of Shakspeare, yet whenever he had an opportunity of appearing before the public, he never failed to elicit applause by his correct and judicious acting.

During the Surrey recess, Mr. Cooke went to the Dublin Theatre, in Peter-street, at that time under the management of Harry Johnston, where he played very many characters in the regular drama; but he was particularly noticed for his performance of clown; the agility, grimace, and comic humour he displayed, produced the deserved encomium of the Irish critics.

After Mr. Cooke's Irish trip, in which he realized both fame and profit, he was engaged by the sub-committee of Drury-lane, in September, 1816, and made his first appearance at that theatre as "Diego Monez," in a melo-drama called "the Quito Gate;" although this was a character greatly beneath his talents, yet he contrived to throw into it considerable interest. He likewise played Bagatelle, in the Poor Soldier, in which he displayed great comic humour, speaking the broken French allotted to the character with great accuracy: and the way in which he discovered his master to be the person he had challenged to fight, was ludicrous in the extreme. But his masterly delineation of Hans Ketster, in the Innkeeper's Daughter, stamped him in the estimation of the best judges of histrionic talent, as an actor of sterling merit.

He continued to form a part of the Drury-lane company, until the vacillating conduct of the sub-committee drove him from that theatre, in disgust. He was, however, induced to join Mr. T. Dibdin's *corps dramatique* at the Surrey, where he took the lead in all characters of an heroic cast, for which his voice, person, and manner, so justly qualify him. His performance of the Duke of Argyle, in the Heart of Mid Lothian, must be seen to be duly appreciated.

Soon after this period, he was engaged by the spirited proprietor of the English Opera-House, to superintend the melo-dramatic department. His performance of Dirk Hatteraick; in the new version of Guy Mannering, is unequalled. Kalig, in the Blind Boy;—the Vampire,—Baron Trenck, &c. are all excellent. When the season closes at this theatre, Mr. Cooke generally returns to the Coburg, where he undertakes the duty of stage-manager, where his kind conciliating manners and gentlemanly conduct has endeared him to all his brother actors.

Our limits will not allow us to enumerate the many characters he has played at this house; but we shall do him a great injustice, if we let slip an opportunity of offering our meed of praise for his performance of Ben Billows, in the False Friend, which we consider the finest delineation of a British sailor on the stage.

Mr. Cooke unquestionably possesses all the requisites for an actor; a fine manly person, a voice deep and sonorous, together with a face capable of great expression.

After what we have said of Mr. T. P. Cooke, we are sure we shall not lay open to the charge of severity, but as friends to

this gentleman, we beg to offer him a piece of advice ; we do candidly think that he aims at making points, by laying too much emphasis upon his words, and which begets a monotony : we are sure Mr. Cooke is a man of education as well as of talent ; a little attention, therefore, will soon remedy the evil of which we complain.

In the social relations of life, we have reason to believe Mr. Cooke in every way amiable ; as a husband, a brother, and a friend, his conduct is irreproachable. That he may continue to enjoy the favour of the public, (which he so justly merits,) is our sincere wish, and in this hope we say to our readers—

View well the actor,—with critic rigour scan,
And then deny him merit, if you can.

H.

Literary Notices.

Theatrical Portraits, with other Poems, by Harry Stoe Van Dyk. London: Miller, Fleet-street. 12mo. pp. 151.

WERE we disposed to enter minutely into a discussion of the intrinsic merits of the present production, our opinion might very possibly assume a tenacity of deportment, more serious than is our intention or wish of advancing.

"Theatrical Portraits" are evidently the effort of a young artist ; and if there is an inefficiency in the mixture of *light* and *shade*, calculated to render the various sketches replete, there is, at least, some natural force of expression drawn and tinted with a peculiar care, enough to satisfy an impartial observer, that the pencil is prided by no unskilful hand, and that the influence of time, added to a finer cultivation of taste, must at a future period, be attended with certain success : coming at once to its poetic beauties, when we affirm that the lines are pleasingly written, free from affectation, and breathing a sweetness of melody throughout, we are saying much in their behalf ; but if the maturity of judgment, or the correct description of character be expected, our readers will, in such case, be disappointed. Mr. Van Dyk has doubtless passed some agreeable hours in their composition, since a smartness of compliment towards the individual, more than the ability, has been the leading feature which he studied to portray, partiality appears to have dictated his muse too often, on the one hand, and an elaborate display of the harmony of verse has superseded the strict-

ness of examination, on the other,—however, to afford our readers an opportunity of estimating their value, we intend, for our future pages, to select various effusions, with our ideas connected therewith, contenting ourselves, for the present moment, with the following specimen, one of the principal in the collection.

TO MISS STEPHENS.

“ SAY, what can rob the dungeon of distress,
Or soothe the hours of mental wretchedness;
What pow’r, what charm, possessess the sweet art
Of luring sorrow gently from the heart,
Like plaintive Music?—in the strain that dies,
We hear the trembling echoes of our sighs!
And when in gloomy solitude we mourn,
We love the sounds that sigh forth in return;
For, while we list their melancholy tone,
We feel our sorrows are but half our own.
There is a soul which breathes within thy lay,
Would turn the murd’rer from his guilty way,
And bid th’ uncultur’d savage spare his prey.
Thou could’st from Suicide the thoughts beguile,
Could’st bid the lone wretch drop his knife, and smile:
For O! soft Music hath the pow’r to win
The erring wand’rer from the paths of sin,
And lead him back with pity’s heav’nly tone,
To smiling Virtue’s pure and flow’ry throne.

“ Sweet artless Melodist! to thee belong
The feelings which gives eloquence to song:
Bright form of Truth!—Timidity’s own child!—
Thy mien is modest, as thy strains are wild:
Thou showest woman in her loveliest dress,
Charm’st by thy smiles, and win’st with gentleness.
Plaintive *Ophelia*, sweet *Mandane*, stay!
My soul would fain still linger on thy lay;
Thy voice recalls the dreams of love and joys,
Which childhood fosters, but which age destroys.
I list entranc’d, and as the last notes die,
I feel their pow’r, and own them with a sigh!
So soothingly they fall upon mine ear,
I thank the charm that lulls me—with a tear.”

— 00 —

To the Editor of the Mirror of the Stage.

SIR,—As I presume your publication is open for all subjects relative to the drama, perhaps the subjoined narrative may not be unacceptable.

Royalty Theatre, Wellclose-square.—The wild attempt to raise this theatre, (I cannot say its rise, as it never attained such honour,) and its speedy desertion, are instances not to be paralleled in theatrical history. The first stone of the spacious building, intended for a new theatre, erected near Wellclose-square, was laid by Mr. John Palmer, of Drury-lane Theatre, on Monday, Dec. 26th, 1785, a grand procession being made on the occasion. Mr. Palmer, assisted by his son, deposited, in a cavity appropriated for that purpose, an inscription which was publicly read by John Morgan, Esq. Recorder of Maidstone, of which the following is an authentic copy.

"The inscription of this scroll is intended to convey the following information:

That, on Monday, the 26th of December, 1785,

And in the twenty-sixth year of the reign

Of our most gracious Sovereign George the Third,

The first stone of a building, intended for a place of public entertainment,

Was laid by John Palmer, comedian,

In the presence of a numerous party of friends to the undertaking;

John Willmot, Esq. being the architect and builder.

The ground selected for the purpose being situate within the Liberty

**OF HIS MAJESTY'S FORTRESS AND PALACE
OF THE TOWER OF LONDON.**

It has been resolved, that, in honour of the magistrates, the military officers, and inhabitants of the said fortress and palace, the edifice, when erected, shall be called The Royalty Theatre; sanctioned by authority, and liberally patronised by subscription."

Mr. Palmer was the appointed manager; among the performers were Miss Quick, Ryder, Johnstone, Folles, Mrs. Martyn, Mrs. Wells, Mrs. Gibbs. Among the authors engaged, were Mr. Murphy, Mr. Vaughan, &c.; besides eminent composers, artists, &c. The opening of the theatre was announced for June 20th, 1787; but previous to this, a cautionary advertisement appeared in the public prints, signed by Messrs. Harris, Linley, and Colman, managers of the theatres royal, showing the statute, which enacts that all persons acting contrary to the provisions in that act, shall be deemed rogues and vagabonds; and announcing a determination to prosecute all who should offend against the law. This annunciation had the desired effect; for all the chief performers seceded from the com-

pany. Finding they could not act legally for hire, a subterfuge was adverted to, and the theatre was opened for the benefit of the London Hospital. The house was exceedingly full,—but far from brilliant; the curtain rose at seven o'clock, and a few voices calling for Mr. Palmer's patent, occasioned some disturbance; on which the manager came forward, and in a conciliating speech implored the audience to preserve a peaceable conduct, and not give his enemies cause of complaint. When the tumult had subsided; after a facetious address by Arthur Murphy, Esq. the comedy of *As You Like it* was presented, and the farce of *Miss in her Teens*; the characters were not expressed in the bills of the day, but were cast as follows:—

As you Like it.

Jacques . . .	Mr. Palmer.
Orlando . . .	Mr. Harrington.
Oliver . . .	Mr. Watfield.
Touchstone . . .	Mr. Kipling.
Duke . . .	Mr. L'Estrange.
Duke Frederic . . .	Mr. Hudson.
Amiens . . .	Mr. W. Palmer.
Rosalind . . .	Mrs. Belfille.
Celia . . .	Mrs. Fox.
Audrey . . .	Miss Hall.
Phœbe . . .	Miss Bennett.

Miss in her Teens.

Fribble . . .	Mr. W. Palmer.
Puff . . .	Mr. Follett.
Jasper . . .	Mr. Simpson.
Capt. Lovett . . .	Mr. Westcoat.
Capt. Flash . . .	Mr. Palmer.
Miss Biddy . . .	Mrs. Gibbs.

To be continued.

—oo—

Theatrical Diary.

Haymarket Theatre.—Aug 12th. Marriage of Figaro, Match Making, Plot and Counter Plot.—13th. The Hypocrite, Marriage of Figaro.—14th. Heir at Law, Lovers' Quarrels, Killing no Murder.—15th. Hypocrite, Marriage of Figaro.—16th. Marriage of Figaro, Match Making, Peter Fin.—17th. Barber of Seville, the Wedding Day, Catherine and Petruchio.—19. Barber of Seville, John Buzzby.—20th. The Hypocrite, Marriage of Figaro.—21st. Green Man, Barber of Seville.—22d. School for Scandal, Killing no Murder.—23d. Hypocrite, Barber of Seville.—24th. Barber of Seville, Lovers' Quarrels, Katharine and Petruchio.

THE more we frequent this theatre, so much the more numerous are the claims it holds forth for our decided attention. The rapid improvements in every department during the present season have fully met with their reward, and talent and variety have equally obtained their appreciation. We remember to have made some few visits on the opening of last season, but so dull and insipid was the usual "bill of fare," that public patronage seemed fast declining, and each admirer

of Thalia freely predicted that unless an immediate change took place, this delightfully constructed emporium for mirth and hilarity, must ultimately sink into complete *mediocre*, fortunately, that change has taken place, and we enter the walls of the new Haymarket Theatre with all the ardour, with all the anticipating pleasure, which we have, for a succession of years experienced from the old establishment. Whatever may be the rigour of our feelings, here it must be softened, and in despite of resolution, gravity yields to perfect freedom and jocularly,—'tis here we witness in the highest perfection, the irresistible drollery of Liston,—the vivacity of Jones,—the quaint and agreeable humour of Terry,—the fashionable accomplishment of Mrs. Chatterley,—nay, we could fill up a page in description, and to augment further the acquaintance we have the pleasing and improving talent of Miss Paton; indeed, the efforts of the manager appear unremitting, we have no question as to the ample satisfaction.

The admirable comedy of the *Hypocrite* was played on Tuesday evening, with much success; its principal feature was Terry's first representation of the clerical devotee, it was an excellent performance, though in several instances we could but perceive an inferiority to that of Downton; the species of cunning with which the character abounds, was certainly managed with greater adroitness than by Terry. Perhaps we are biassed, at all events, we give the Dr. Cantwell of Downton much the preference. Liston's Mawworm was laughable, but we could not witness it with the real approbation as we remember to have felt on seeing Oxberry, why he did not play the part in the present instance, we cannot imagine.

Liston could not have lost any the more of his popularity in consigning it to Oxberry, it would add to the attraction of the performance were he to do so, notwithstanding he afforded considerable mirth. Wrench is the only Colonel Lambert on the stage, and though ably performed by Mr. Johnson, the difference was immensely striking. Mrs. Chatterley as Charlotte was excessively spirited and amusing, and merited most deservedly the plaudits obtained.

Miss Paton's first performance of Rosina, in the Barber of Seville, occasioned a crowded house on Saturday evening. Her personation of the character entitled her, if possible, to more applause than any previous attempt. The progress made by Miss Paton, in so short a time, is strikingly perceptible; not

that her style or execution can have attained further improvement, beyond what the possession of confidence and warm encouragement must necessarily promote and acknowledge. We have no hesitation in pronouncing her to be a clever girl. In addition to the value of her vocal powers, her talent as an actress is chaste and effective, such as must render her an important acquisition to a winter establishment. Jones, as *Alma-viva*, is sufficiently known to need panegyric; as is Liston's *Figaro*. *Tayleure*, in *Antonio*, created much merriment. Why don't Mr. Leoni Lee make better arrangements with the orchestra? his *drum-major* style of keeping time is neither becoming nor judicious; but the instrumental company of this theatre is lamentably idle. The comedy of the *Green Man* was played this evening, being the first time this season. The performers differ from the original cast, but very triflingly. Jones bustled through *Crackley*, with all his customary life and gaiety. Terry's Mr. Green retains its utmost force and superiority. Oxberry, as Major *Dumpling*, was very entertaining; he made considerable humour. The Captain *Bibber* of Mr. Baker is decidedly mistaken by him; he ought to have played and *dressed* the character very different: it is not a Captain *Absolute*. *Fungus* has fallen into the hands of a Mr. Lacy; it was just respectable, and no more. Mrs. Chatterly made much of *Bertha*. Mrs. Gibbs was the original *Tuckett*; her successor, Mrs. *Tayleure*, is deserving of much encomium: she is a pretty woman, and a prettier actress.

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English Opera House.—Aug. 12th. *Gordon the Gipsy*, *Love among the Roses*, *The Highland Reel*.—13th. *Promissory Note*, *Matrimony*, *Gordon the Gipsy*.—14th. *Love among the Roses*, *Amateurs and Actors*, *Gordon the Gipsy*.—15th. *Gil Blas*, *Wine and Water*.—16th. *Gil Blas*, *Love among the Roses*.—17th. *Gil Blas*, *The Purse*.—19th. *Gil Blas*, *Gordon the Gipsy*.—20th. *Gil Blas*, *Gordon the Gipsy*.—21st. *Gil Blas*, *Gordon the Gipsy*.—22d. *Gil Blas*, *Gordon the Gipsy*.—23d. *Gil Blas*, *Gordon the Gipsy*.—24th. *Gil Blas*, *Gordon the Gipsy*.

The operatic drama of *Gil Blas* has, at length, made its appearance; we should have been pleased if the result of our expectations had received a better reward. The fable of *Gil Blas* is so well known to our readers, "even from our schoolboy days," that to enter into its detail must be unnecessary: it is given to our notice in a dramatic shape, as such we shall examine it accordingly. Accustomed as the frequenters of the

English Opera are to burlettas of a light, fanciful, and entertaining species, and those, perhaps, a change of three each evening, a drama of the extent of the present must be unquestionably tedious and irksome. It requires a performance of excellent worth, with a cast of superior and a *nouvelle* description, that can in any way compensate for the engrossment of so much time, for the demand levied on our patience, and what is still more persecuting, under the reigning planet, for the subordination of our person to the intense heat and perspiration, during an intercourse of five immensely long acts; or, as the play-bills inform us, the supposed "period of thirty-five years." We repeat that a heavy compensation we certainly looked for, but the task of meeting our ideas with it remains incomplete; and we have to deplore that the taste of the managers, and the abilities of "the authors," are at once so far from being meritorious. The following is an outline of the production.

After receiving the blessing of Gil Perez, (the canon,) with a few ducats as a probationary remembrance, Gil Blas departs on his travels. On the road to Pennafflor he is stopped by Pecaro, (Wrench,) "an associate on the look-out," to whom he is compelled to assist: he proceeds to the nearest inn, where he again encounters with Pecaro, differently attired, who, in a very *sociable* and *Jeremy Diddler-like* manner relieves Gil Blas, already famishing with hunger,—of his supper;—repeats a number of odd sort of jokes, *while Gil Blas performs a sara-band!!* The comrades of Pecaro being near, Pecaro contrives to exit with great *nonchalance*, leaving Gil Blas to discharge the reckoning. The robbers surround him in an adjoining thicket, and the conveying him to the cavern finishes the act. The second represents the banditti haunt, where Gil has sundry menial duties thrust upon him, and we see him as *second waiter* to the "gentlemen band of cut-throats." Here he meets with a fellow-prisoner, Donna Mencia, (Miss Carew,) with whom he successfully escapes. In the third act, we find Gil Blas (Pearman) "naturally grown older," and making love most violently to Donna Mencia. Fernando, (Mr. Bland,) her brother, returns home rather unexpectedly, and finds a signior promenading his father's garden; a smart contest ensues with these youths, "hot in blood;" Fernando is wounded, and Gil retreats to the chamber of Donna Mencia, pursued by the domestics; but in consequence of some essential services done for the Count de Polan, all is forgiven, and the marriage of Gil Blas and the

Count's daughter, terminates the affair. Another elapse is supposed for twenty-five years; and the fourth and fifth acts assume quite a new feature, and with little or no interest. Gil Blas is a portly, well-meaning, sentimental kind of citizen, by Bartley, with Pecaro as his "reformed secretary." Next we are to understand, that Philip IV. of Spain, in occasional disguises, (Rowbotham,) visits Gil Blas with certain proposals towards his daughter Antonia, which are rejected with severe contempt, and Gil Blas raves about in a very heroic tone for a considerable time, to the great pleasure, no doubt, of the matronly part of the audience, his language chiefly regarding virtue, honour, sobriety, and all the usual chaste *et ceteras*; for which the king, in order to tamper with him somewhat further, commits him to prison: some few acknowledgements subsequently take place; Pecaro visits him as a confessor, and is the means of saving his life from the vengeance of the robber leader, Rolando, who is degenerated into a jailor; a trifling matter takes place, and the last scene discovers the King of Spain joining the hands of Antonia and Don Gaston, (Broadhurst,) when the whole of the business happily rests.

This then is the produce of *two or three*, or more authors, and a *summer's preparation*. We regret that its attainment is so little profitable. The *materiel* of the piece is ascribed to Mr. Peake; and this we can easily discover, by the frequent attempts at punning, which Mr. Peake feels himself particularly conversant with, but which occasionally is very far from being successful. We are not in the humour to dissect the performance of Gil Blas, with that nicety of skill that we could wish, as it would affect too seriously a detail of its demerits. Gil Blas never could have afforded sufficient interest for a drama of five acts, be it handled in whatever shape it may; the scenes of such a production are too pithy,—there is but trifling situation that can be called into use: and then the number of characters are too crowded, and too void of meaning, to make an agreeable combination, as an opera of three acts, for the purpose of producing a display of vocal talent, which this theatre has been known to possess,—it would have been unquestionably entertaining,—it would have been less expensive,—and the *treasury* would have *doubly* felt the benefit. We remember to have seen a much better piece, some two seasons since, at Astley's, where it had to combat with many disadvantages, yet was, to a certain degree, highly praiseworthy: true, they had the aid of horses, and the opportunity for pourtraying

their peculiar sagacity was embraced in a variety of incident, that could not fail of obtaining the utmost admiration. We never recollect to have endured so much fatigue, under any dramatic representation, as in the present instance; it ought to have ended at the third act, and to this even we found many parts hang dreadfully tedious. The performers acquitted themselves in the most able manner. The *Gil Blas* of Miss Kelly was very prepossessing. Wrench, as Pecaro, exerted himself beyond what we could have expected; the character was doubtless written for Harley, and in his hands would have been the leading feature; nevertheless, to Mr. Wrench the "authors" are greatly indebted. Wilkinson, as a robber, and then the *pious* servant of *Gil Blas*, was excessively humorous. The part of Rolando is not important enough for the talent of T. P. Cooke; he made the most of it. Miss Carew sang with sweetness,—her ballad in the cavern was one of her happiest efforts. Pearman, J. Bland, and Miss Povey, were also heard with much enthusiasm. Broadhurst, with the exception of two songs, had nothing to do. Bartley is not the *Gil Blas* we should have looked for. Philip IV. was played by Rowbotham in a superior style; we saw him to great advantage. The scenery is chiefly common-place, save the cavern, which is executed in a most masterly style,—the wood overhanging, lighted by the moon's ray, produced a powerful effect. The music is pretty, particularly the two songs composed by Mr. F. Sor.

—oo—

Surry Theatre.—Aug. 12th. *Fortunes of Nigel*, Innkeeper of Abbeville. —18th. *Murderer, or the Devoted Son*, and *Zeraldi, or the day of St. Mark*. —14th. *Nigel, &c.*—15th. *Murderer, &c.*—16th. *Nigel, &c.*—17th. *Murderer, &c.*—19th. *Nigel, and the Three Fishermen*.—20th. *Murderer, &c.*—21st. *Nigel, &c.*—22d. *Murderer, &c.*—23d. *Nigel, &c.*—24th. *Murderer, &c.*

The performances at this theatre continue to attract crowded houses. The *Fortunes of Nigel*, although revived after a short *shelving*, still continues to draw admiring crowds; the acting of Messrs. Burroughs, Bengough, and Buckingham, we think improves, but we must not omit to record our praise for Mr. Weston's very able personation of "*Richie Moniplies*," we hope the manager will afford the play-going public, frequent opportunities of seeing this gentleman.

The *Murderer, or the Devoted Son*, is likewise highly relished by all, we consider this piece to be one of the best dramatic importations, since the celebrated *Therese*, the language

is neat, the scenery is appropriate, and the acting, with some exceptions, good.

The Pantomime, although one of the best compilations we ever saw, yet we think the manager would best consult his interests by varying his pieces a little,—in this warm season, we are too much fatigued by our literary labours, to laugh heartily at the fooleries of the triple clowns.

—oo—

Royal Coburg Theatre.—Aug. 12th. *Lear of Private Life*, New Divertisement, and *De La Perouse*.—13th. *Lear*, &c.—14th. *Lear*, *Perouse*, and *Puck and the Puddings*.—15th. *Look before you Leap*, *Gilderoy*, *Phillip Quarl*.—16th. *Look before you Leap*, &c.—17th. *Look before you Leap*, &c.—19th. *Edward the Black Prince*, and *Philip Quarl*.—20th. *Edward*, &c.—21st. *Edward*, &c.—22d. *Edward*, &c.—23d. *Edward*, &c.—24th. *Edward*, &c.

A splendid and highly interesting melodrame called *Edward the Black Prince*, or the *Battle of Poitiers*, was produced for the first time at this theatre, on Monday last, the plot of which, the following is a brief outline :

The piece is supposed to commence immediately after the memorable battle of Cressy, where Edward III. defeated the French, after a bloody contest, it opens with a view of the British encampment, before the village of Beauvois, near Poitiers; the glory the English army has gained, is celebrated by a martial chorus of the soldiery. The next scene, the Black Prince (Huntley) harangues his troops upon the glory of the anticipated conflict against such superior numbers; after this we are introduced to the field of Poitiers, where the French are totally routed by the ambuscade of the English, and John, King of France, (Anderton,) becomes the captive of the Black Prince. We should have mentioned that the Princess Joan, (Mrs. Barrymore,) commonly called the Fair Maid of Kent, is intended by Edward III. as the future bride of the Prince; but he, from some unknown cause, dislikes the match, although he had never seen the Princess: she, however, follows him to France, disguised as a page, and partakes of the dangers of the battle.

The second act opens with a superb scene of the field of battle by moonlight, strewed with the wounded and dead soldiery of both armies; the Prince is seen searching for the body of the page, which he is horror-struck at finding amidst heaps of the slain; he, however, discovers that he is only slightly wounded. Here she betrays the secret of her sex, and

is confided by the Prince to the care of Sir Thomas Howard, (Gomersal,) to take her to England. We then have the grand banquet, where the Prince waits upon his royal captive. The scene changes to a finale and sea-port, then to old London-bridge, and the act concludes with the triumphal entry of the Black Prince into London with his royal prisoner, both mounted on real horses.

The Princess, on her arrival in London, resides in the house of Jonathan Dry, (Davidge,) a retired vintner, who has a young wife, (Mrs. Davidge,) of whom he is very jealous: a laughable scene ensues, in consequence of Dry's supposing Sir Thomas Howard is making love to his young wife. Sir Thomas, however, is enamoured with the Princess Joan, and sends her a letter declaring his passion for her, which letter falls into the hands of Claude, (Miss Watson,) a peasant girl, taken prisoner at Poitiers, and who is the attendant of the Princess; she returns an answer, appointing an assignation with Sir Thomas, and seals the letter with the seal of the Princess. Howard, proud of what he thinks the conquest of the Princess, shows the letter to the Black Prince, who is enraged to find himself deceived: the error, however, is soon explained, and he has the pleasure to find that his faithful page and the lady of his heart, is the very bride King Edward his father (Cooper) had chosen for him. The piece concludes with their marriage, and the institution of the Order of the Garter.

The actors exerted themselves greatly, particularly Huntley, who played with his usual excellence,—delivering the heroic language of his character with energy and effect. Messrs. Sloman and Beverley formed a happy relief to the more sombre parts of the melodrama, the former as a trumpeter in the army, a compound of cowardice and gluttony, and the latter a rough old drummer. Mrs. Barrymore, Miss Watson, and Mrs. Davidge performed their several parts in a very creditable manner. Harwood, as the court fool, was very amusing, the rest of the piece was tolerably well fitted up.

The dresses are splendid, and the scenery uncommonly beautiful, particularly the moonlight scene after the battle; the panoramic view of the British army performing a *Te Deum*, for the victory, and the last scene of St. George's Chapel-window; the language is generally good, sometimes even approaching to a high poetic feeling, and, with the exception of some glaring anachronisms, the piece reflects great credit upon the author, who we understand is a Mr. M'Farren.

Davis's Amphitheatre.—Aug. 12th. Alexander the Great, Thalestris the Amazon, and Industry and Idleness.—13th. Alexander, &c.—14th. Alexander, &c.—15th. Alexander, &c.—16th. Alexander, &c.—17th. Alexander, &c.—19th. Alexander, the American Prodigy, and John Adams.—20th. Alexander, &c.—21st. Alexander, &c.—22d. Alexander, &c.—23d. Alexander, &c.—24th. Alexander, &c.

On Monday, Aug. 12th, a new drama, entitled "Alexander the Great and Thalestris the Amazon," was produced at this theatre. We have only room to say that the piece is tolerably good; the scenery, dresses, and particularly the chariots, are very gorgeous. We shall give a critique of the merits of this piece in our next.

The American prodigy, Il Diavolo Antonio, and the equestrian exercises, together with the ballet of John Adams, still continue to attract.

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Sadler's Wells.—Aug. 12th. Joan of Arc, Rival Indians.—13th. Joan, &c.—14th. Joan, &c.—15th. Joan, &c.—16th. Joan, &c.—17th. Joan, &c.—19th. Joan of Arc, and Jack and Gill.—20th. Joan, &c.—21st. Joan, &c.—22d. Joan, &c.—23d. Joan, &c.—24th. Joan, &c.

MR. EDITOR, I am fond of a walk, of an evening's stroll, last week thought to indulge myself, took my hat, and entered the street. I was at a loss whither to bend me, and having no cane to solve the perplexity, by chance I determined upon a route towards Islington: perhaps you think the "sister hills" had been better; no matter, *Chacon a son gout*. Walking on, "chewing the cud of sweet and bitter fancy," I was aroused from my dreaming by the shrill cry of "bill of the play sir," I was surprised to find myself at Sadler's Wells. The importunate trader again proposed "a bill of the play;" pshaw, thought I, I want no bill, "all's barren here," the *Tom and Jerry* mania has infected even this, a nightly display of vice softened into folly, where the disgusting revels of the libertine are only opposed to the still more repulsive character of the professed impostor and initiated pickpocket, without one single moral accomplishment in excuse for the repeated exhibition of human depravity. (Mind I'm no methodist.) I was pressing forward, perhaps assured a little with this recollection, when my eye catching the corner of the bill, with which the determined matron persecuted me, I saw "*Joan of Arc*," and, to my great satisfaction, no *Tom and Jerry*. Come, think I, I'll see this, bought the bill, magnanimously paid my two shillings in support of dramatic reform, and took my seat in the

pit. *Joan of Arc* was represented, and extremely well. Mrs. Egerton, as the inspired heroine, surprised and delighted; her characterizing by turns, the enthusiast, the daughter, and the victim was chastly correct, and touchingly beautiful. Mr. Lewis *looked* Prince Charles; even Elliston might have applauded his coronation scene; we wish though that Mr L.— but, however, “perfection’s not for men,” *Ruley*, a poor peasant, half killed by love and fear, evinced that simple careless whimsicality which has long pleased his auditors, and which has insured him a patent footing. The circumstances of the piece are too well known for repetition; the author has displayed much taste in adapting them, and, what is unusually, combined with effect and situation. The actors rail in “good set terms.” I was much gratified, and the taste of your readers will not be shocked, if I own that, this “tale of times long past” gave me more satisfaction than the the *coup d’œil* of the “*Back Slums*,” or the mysterious developement of the “*Daffy Club*.” I cannot say your humble servant without mentioning the scenery; it is indeed beautiful, and if I were to be asked where an evening might be passed agreeably, provided my querist were not too classically tenacious, my quick response should be, “go to Sadler’s Wells,” and, o’ my conscience, I I should advise him well; as for seeing Mr. Simpson with his *bear and dog*, let him please himself, so as *Life in London* added to the quadruped’s manœuvres, make it not altogether a *beastly* performance, it will find an admirer in

Your friend,

DICK SLUDGE.

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THEATRICAL CHAT.

Mr. Elliston seems determined to make up, in the ensuing season, the barrenness of the last; we hear he has already engaged Liston, Young, and Terry. Miss Stephens is also on the point of being engaged.

Mr. Harley intends opening the Haymarket in Mathews’s style.





MR. HUNTLEY.
as Edward the Black Prince?